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Secretary of Society on missions
Rev. Adams
Rev. Loyley
N. S.

PAID

Honolulu Sandwich Islands
Nov. 12. 1840

To the Society of inquiry on missions
Princeton Theo. Sem.

Dear Brethren:

It becomes my duty to addless you once more in the name of the mission with which I am connected. Your letter of Aug. 9th/38 was duly received and should have been responded to a year ago, but from the fact that it was mislaid and could not be found for a season. As to the sentiments contained in that letter, it is too late to advert to them particularly now, since the authors of them must have ere this gone forth from that peaceful retreat to the more laborious service of the vineyard; and since we here dissent almost entirely from said sentiments, it would scarcely be proper or profitable to discuss the different topics farther with you now.

That the Students there in the seminary should demur at the high ground taken in our resolutions, is not surprising when it is said in your letter that "a great majority of the students seem to think they have no personal concern even in canvassing the questions" of Missions. What can be expected from such spirits?

But it is not my purpose to dwell at this time to dwell on the general subject of Missions to the heathen. That is doubtless brought before your minds very frequently and in every variety of form, and should it

be still true that a majority of you are not even willing to canvass the question of personal duty in regard to it, after all that has been said and written this is another reason for waiving the general subject and communicating with you on some topics connected with it. It may be however that a deep and serious concern rests on all your minds, in behalf of the poor heathen. A fire from heaven may be now burning and glowing in your hearts, impelling you to make every effort, or sacrifice in your power for the extension of Messiah's Kingdom over the earth. If so, it is the less needful to dwell on the general subject, and the more necessary that your feelings be chastened and your minds informed by the lessons of experience. I have therefore thought, for the first time, of giving you a few hints by way of direct advice, especially those who contemplate going on foreign missions. In doing this I shall merely give you the result of my own observations and reflections, during eight years of missionary service. I would say then to those who expect to go as Ambassadors of Christ to the heathen, I. Let your course of study be as thorough and complete as possible. Do not by any means be in haste to leave the seminary to engage in missionary work. Until you know by experience what that work is, you cannot know what draughts will be daily made upon your mental resources. Could I go over the ground again, and it were possible, I would remain at home a year or two longer, merely for the purpose of study. Neither is it sufficient to confine your attention to moral or theological subjects. A missionary should aim to secure a large amount of general

knowledge, for unless he does, he will be in danger of falling into contempt both among his more intelligent brethren and men of the world. It would be a good idea for the Senior class to review their college studies: revise their recollections of antiquities, general history, Nat. & moral philosophy, Astronomy, dead languages, navigation &c. &c. For who knows but that he may be called upon to bring forth all these treasures into use before he is five years on missionary ground? This has been the fact with me and many others in this mission. But should it be otherwise, the labour would not be lost by any means. A thorough course of study tends to produce maturity of judgment, ability to argue, to illustrate and to bring forth things new and old, and thus to secure respect and influence. Candidates for the missionary service should read some medical books, say Eberle's materia medica, and Practice, Dewees. Works, all of them, and some small work on Anatomy. I devoted a short time to med. Studies before I left home, and it has been of incalculable benefit to me, and those about me. Even a correct knowledge of civil polity sometimes proves of great advantage to a missionary: It does here when the Chiefs lean so much upon us for advice: You are aware also of the position of Mr. Bridgeman in China, as editor of an important journal.

Here is another item of advice, do every thing in your power to secure a healthy condition of the body, and O my brethren I cannot tell how much our mission has & is still suffering, from either disease or debility of the physical man. I feel distressed the moment I look

around and see one brother running about half the year in search of health, another spending much of his time in assisting a feeble wife in the cares of the family, a third entirely laid aside by disease; and in most cases health has not been lost here. They brought none with them. Some even came hoping to find health out here! It seems to me there must be a defect some where in the modern plan of clerical education. Our English brethren in the Pacific are far superior to us in this respect. Some of them are extremely robust, look like bishops (which indeed they are), and are capable of any kind or degree of bodily exertion. While some of us by the time we get into the work are scarcely able to stand on our own feet. This of course is a great drawback on our work; It occasions a good deal of expense and loss of time and derangement in our operations. It aught to be remedied if possible. Do then brethren use every means in your power for preserving your health unimpaired. I cannot now tell you in detail what means I should use for myself, were I going over the ground again. But I think this subject would receive very careful and constant attention. Would it not be well for Theo. Students to read more on the principles of correct living? Would it not be well also to invite the attention of medical men to the causes of so much poor health among ministers? A lecture or two a year from some able medical gentlemen might also have a good effect. None of the learned professions seem to suffer so much from

the above cause as that of the ministry (Why?) and yet no profession so much needs men of robust constitutions. Is not much to be attributed to one evil, viz. too great haste in preparing for the momentous work? Depend upon it, that is not an enlightened zeal, which impels a young man while preparing for the ministry, to take a course which will in a measure unfit him for the duties of the very office to which he aspires. It will be well also to have regard to this subject when you are seeking companions, to engage with you in the missionary service. Look out for health as well as piety

This leads me to another item of advice viz. if you are resolved to go to the heathen and calculate to marry, do not allow yourselves to be brought into such circumstances that you must unnaturally hasten in that important business as some, yea many have done and myself among the rest. The Lord provided for me a good companion, much better than I deserved, but were the thing to be done again, I would not hurry as I did, or as I have seen others do, on any account. A missionary's wife is emphatically his earthly all and should he or she be unhappily connected, the trial is peculiarly severe and the good cause must suffer in consequence. The missionary cause is too important too, dignified, too good to be put in jeopardy if not in ridicule by such hasty proceeding. Take time and act like other wise men in this matter.

In order too that you may act freely not only on this, but on other subjects, let me advise you not to be in haste to commit yourselves to any of the Boards until you are ripe for the service. I see no special advantage in becoming connected with a Miss'y Board, long before one

is prepared to leave the country, and there is some disadvantage arising from such connection.

When you commence negotiations with any of the Boards ascertain fully the relation you are to sustain to them and they to you. Get all their laws, circulars &c. and read them: Inquire into the difficulties that have existed between the Board and some of its missions, whence they have arisen, how settled &c. Do you commit yourselves to that Board for life? if not in what way can the connection be easily and honorably dissolved? A good acquaintance with these & similar points will not only enable you to know on what ground you stand in regard to the Board, but prepare you to act intelligently when you arrive on heathen ground.

Again, having made up your minds to be missionaries to the heathen and having completed your education, be not over anxious about the future. Commit that unto God. You are not to go alone: The master is to go with you and he will lead you and comfort you. Rather give attention to searching your motives, lest they be wrong, lest ambition, vain glory, a thirst for novel scenes, desire to attract public notice &c. have a place in the heart, Cultivate with all possible care the graces of patience, meekness and humility: Try to obtain such views of Christ & heaven as to produce a high degree of deadness to the world: so that you be not too much affected by circumstances or changes: Calculate to see evil days, dark and dreary days, but let not this move you. A firm faith will enable you to stand, yea, to rejoice, even in the darkest hour. Faith throws a rainbow on every cloud, and the darker the cloud the brighter the bow.

But it is possible you do not need this advice. It is nothing new to be sure, but may be of some use proceeding from one who has been eight years in the work you have in contemplation.

I must close by giving you a few items of news as to the state of our churches, congregations, schools, presses &c. It is much as it has been for two or three years past. The ~~chu~~ churches you are aware are very large and as you might expect a good deal of discipline is called for at times; but there has been no general defection. The treaty forced upon the government by La Place, the Frenchman, has been the means of doing great mischief. Ardent Spirit of all kinds is now afloat all over the islands, and as you would expect, every evil work follows. The evil is incalculable. But it does not become us to indulge malice against the French altho. I confess it is difficult for me to suppress feelings of indignation at times. Vengeance is mine, I will repay ~~it~~ saith the Lord. We have still hopes that the French ministry will not sanction the proceedings of La Place, but will reverse them and return the $20,000. On the supposition that the French Government is properly informed, it seems impossible, that they can sustain such outrageous conduct towards a poor, defenceless nation---- Another evil as you may be aware that is spreading among the islands is Romanism. There has been within a few weeks a reinforcement of ~~five~~ individuals to the Romish mission, and it is said fifteen more are expected shortly; all Frenchmen. In some parts of this island they have made a few converts, and quite a number of the natives show an inclination to turn to them, but they are not generally such as have been

under the influence of the mission. They have made a beginning on Hawaii but with little success as yet. It is a remarkable fact that Rum & Romanism have come in here hand in hand and walk hand in hand. They were both thrust in also by the strong arm of power. The two vessels which brought the last reinforcements to that mission from Valparaiso, have also brought large cargoes of ardent spirit.

You will see dear Brethren from the above statements the importance of prayer in behalf of the Saviour's cause in these islands. Let the churches not forget us in their prayers. The time to try men's souls has come here. Our large churches must now be sifted like wheat, and their pastors need more wisdom and strength than ever. This we expect to get through prayer to our God. Will you not then remember us in your prayers?

The attention of our mission is much given to the children and youth, and I am happy to say, the prospects of the "rising race" is growing brighter. The Government has recently enacted a code of ~~laws~~ common schools laws, requiring all suitable children to attend school and making a tolerable provision for the support of teachers, the erection of school-houses &c. None are to be recognized as teachers of schools except those who receive a commission from the teachers in the Seminary. We hail this measure as a token of good for the nation and for Zion. Our greatest difficulty now is to get suitable teachers and in sufficient numbers.

The graduates of the Seminary are our chief reliance, but some of them are incompetent and unworthy and others are in the service of the government.

The Am. Exploring Squadron has been at this port for more than two months. We have been much pleased with the commanders Wilkes & Hudson and the officers generally. So far as I know, their deportment has been agreeable to all parties in Honolulu and many of them seem to be ready to put their hand to every good work. For one I feel that they are an honour to our country, and some of them ornaments in the church of Christ. Their influence here, with the exception of the drunken, degraded, seamen, has been decidedly good. May the God of nations make this squadron a rich blessing to every land to which it may go.

We need more labourers in this part of the vineyard. Who of you will come over and help us? The prospect is now that two of our stations will be vacant before we can possibly procure occupants for them. The health of Mess. Hitchcock and Parker is very poor and of such a character as to afford but little hope of their labouring any more with efficiency.

We also need a Seaman's Chaplain for this port. Mr. Diell's work is done: He returns to America with his family in the ship Lausanne. Will not some 4 or 5 of you then obey this call and come out with Mr. Bingham? The post of seamen's chaplain is a hard one, and needs a good man. An indifferent one will not succeed. These islands are increasing in importance every year, in a commercial point of view, a thing which renders it desirable to sustain an efficient moral machinery at every post. I say again Brethren, I say it to the Fathers too pray for us.

With fraternal regards to you all
I remain your affectionate Brother in Christ

Richd Armstrong